

S Asian states discuss ways to check terror financing

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
New Delhi

Officials from South Asian countries, including Bangladesh, have wrapped up talks on government action to stop terror financing of charitable institutions.

The three-day conference in New Delhi, which quietly ended yesterday, was held against the backdrop of growing international realisation that charities have been used for financing terrorist activities.

The aim of the conference

was to promote government action to prevent terror groups from exploiting humanitarian and religious charities as a way to conceal illegal transactions of funds across the world, said a statement by the US Embassy, New Delhi.

Officials from Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Nepal, the Maldives, the European Union and the United States attended the conference hosted by the US Embassy and the Asia Pacific Group on Money Laundering.

The conference explored methods to prevent charitable sectors from funding terrorism and maintain donors' confidence in the integrity of charities.

Daniel Gasner, acting Assistant Secretary (terror financing) in the US Department of Treasury who had visited Delhi last month, said the US has identified charity and internet among some of the primary means used by various terrorist outfits for fund raising and money laundering.

"Charity is a primary means through which a terror organization raises funds...indeed, more charities have been designated for supporting terrorists than any other type of organization", he added.

Gasner also said, "Charities represent a uniquely ideal vehicle not just to raise and move funds but to provide material support to violent extremist movements in the form of radicalisation, indoctrination and logistical cover and support".



Saudi Ambassador Abdullah Bin Naser Al-Busairi calls on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at her official residence at Jamuna in the city yesterday.

Govt-NGO partnership a must to conserve tigers

Experts say at workshop

UNB, Dhaka

Experts at a workshop yesterday called for expanding government and non-government partnership to build collaboration for protecting the Royal Bengal Tigers in the Sundarbans.

Joint cooperation among the stakeholders, especially the government and local NGOs, is necessary for conserving tigers to maintain the ecosystem of the world's largest salt-tolerant mangrove forest, they added.

The experts said this at a national workshop on 'Bangladesh Tiger Action Plan (Drafted for 2009-2017)' jointly organised by Forest Department and Wildlife Trust of Bangladesh (WTB) at Agargaon in the city.

Environment and Forests Secretary Dr Mihir Kanti Mazumder was present as the chief guest at the programme with Chief Conservator of Forests Md Abdul Motaleb in the chair, while WTB Chief Executive Prof Md Anwarul Islam moderated it.

Mihir explained the importance of tiger as an umbrella of the species, saying, "By protecting tiger, we will be able to protect the biodiversity in the Sundarbans."

He said Royal Bengal Tiger is the symbol of national pride, adding, "We should take initiatives for making the tiger as our national brand."

The forest secretary further said, "The government will support all such initiatives."

FOOD COURT AT DIST HC rule on govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court (HC) yesterday issued a rule upon the government to explain why it should not be directed to appoint a public food analyst and set up a food court at every district in the country as per provisions of Pure Food Ordinance 1959 for ensuring pure food and safety of public health.

An HC bench of Justice ABM Khairul Haque and Justice Md Mamtazuddin Ahmed issued the rule upon a petition filed as a public interest litigation by Manzill Murshid, a lawyer of the Supreme Court.

Local government and rural development (LGRD) minister acting as chairman of National Food Advisory Council, joint secretary (admin) of the LGRD, and the secretaries to the ministries of law, health and food were asked to reply to the rule within two weeks.

Earlier on January 18, the HC, upon a writ petition filed by the same petitioner, issued a rule upon the government to explain why it should not be directed to constitute the National Food Safety Advisory Council as per provisions of Pure Food Ordinance 1959 for obtaining appropriate advices and policies related to food safety and quality control.

As the government replied to the HC rule stating that the government in 2005 has constituted the National Food Advisory Council as per provisions of Pure Food Ordinance 1959, Manzill Murshid yesterday filed a supplementary petition with the HC to direct the government to appoint a public food analyst and set up a food court at every district.

Manzill Murshid himself moved the petition, while deputy attorney general Karunamoy Chakma stood for the government.

Conservator of Forests (Wildlife) Ishtiaq Uddin Ahmed said most tigers attack people in Sathkira Range, while Swarankhola upazila in Bagerhat is most victimised as tigers enter the adjacent villages.

"Human-tiger conflict in the Sundarbans should be addressed with the eyes of local people," he added.

Arannak Foundation Executive Director Farid Uddin Ahmed said the government should increase its

investment in the sector to earn more revenues from the Sundarbans.

Khulna University teacher Fazlul Haq said it is important to ensure only sustainable wood extraction from the forest.

Dr Monirul Hasan Khan of Jahangirnagar University said sustainable food chain management and ecosystem health monitoring should be introduced in the national tiger plan for maintaining ecological balance in the forest.

Panic grips BCL leaders

DU CORRESPONDENT

Panic has gripped many leaders of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) who were involved in different anti-organisational activities including instigation of violence on Dhaka University (DU) campus following reports that law enforcement agencies have prepared a list of those leaders.

Only few BCL central leaders are now seen on DU campus since two central BCL leaders were arrested by Rab on April 13 on charge of disrupting academic atmosphere on the campus.

The BCL men whose names could be on the list are now moving very cautiously and do not go outside the campus.

Sources in the government said Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has already directed

the home ministry to take stern action against BCL men who are involved or would conspire to destabilise the campus situation.

The home ministry in the meantime has directed all law enforcement agencies including elite force Rab to take action against perpetrators accordingly.

Rab officials as per direction have also prepared a short list of some BCL suspects for disrupting academic atmosphere.

At a meeting with BCL top leaders on Tuesday, Hasina warned of stern action including a possible "five-year jail" for those who would 'try' or be involved in campus violence.

The government has faced severe criticism from different quarters following indiscriminate campus violence involving BCL men on different campus.

7.34 tonnes of MS rods looted

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dacoits yesterday looted over 7.34 metric tonnes of MS rods from a newly installed sales depot of BSRM Group of Companies at Teguria in Keraniganj.

A BSRM press release said an armed gang of 30 to 45 people entered the depot blindfolded by breaking the main gate at around 2:30am and tied the security men up.

Manager of the depot Najmul Huda Akand filed a case with South Keraniganj Police Station in this connection.

Obituary

METRO DESK

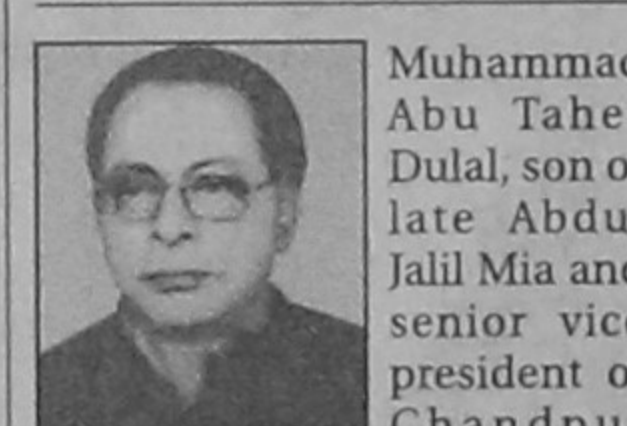
Engr AM Nuruddin Ahmad, a naval architect, former chairman of Bangladesh Steel and Engineering Corporation (BSEC), additional secretary of the ministry of industries, passed away on April 14 at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU), says a press release.

He left behind his two daughters one on son.

On the occasion, a doa mahfil will be held at his residence at House No 217, Lane No 2, DOHS Baridhara in the city after Asr prayers today.

Muhammad Abu Taher

METRO DESK



Muhammad Abu Taher Dulal, son of late Abdul Jalil Mia and senior vice president of Chandpur

Awami League, passed away due to a cardiac arrest in Chandpur on April 11, says a press release.

Dulal, a freedom fighter, left behind his wife, two daughters and two sons, friends, relatives, party colleagues to mourn his death.

He was laid to rest in Chandpur Poura graveyard with state honour.

Dulal was a nephew of former prime minister late Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury.

Abul Bashar

Abul Bashar, father of Masud Ahmed, vice-president of Bangladesh Jatiyatabadi Jubo Dal Dhaka Mahanagar south unit, passed away yesterday due to old age complications at the age of 80, says a press release.

Jubo Dal President Barkatullah Bulu MP and General Secretary Syed Moazzem Hossain Alal consoled the death and conveyed sympathy to members of the bereaved family.

Death anniversary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Today is the 9th death anniversary of Harun-or-Rashid, a politician and social worker of Gazipur, says a press release.

He was a close associate of First Prime Minister Tajuddin Ahmed and president of Bangladesh Awami League Kapasia Tok Union unit.

On the occasion, a Quankhwani and milad will be held at his 508 Noyatola residence in the city.

Shabnam Huq

METRO DESK

Today is the 9th death anniversary of Shabnam Huq, wife of Arham Masudul Huq, executive vice president and company secretary of Dhaka Bank Limited, says a press release.

On the occasion, a Quankhwani and doa mahfil will be held at Rahmat-e-Alam Islam Mission Orphanage, Tejgaon.

JMB militant held in Naogaon

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Police arrested one more militant belonging to the banned Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) from Atrai upazila yesterday, while they sought a 10-day remand for three Jamaat men held on Tuesday under suspicion of having links with the Islamist outfit.

Acting on a tip-off, the police arrested Hamidur Rahman, a close aide of the executed JMB leader Siddiqui Islam alias Bangla Bhai from Shahebagj Bazar near Atrai municipality as the militant was returning home from his longhikeout.

The arrestee, 46, a listed JMB militant and son of Adesh Ali of Jamgram village in the upazila, admitted to his involvement in JMB activities, said Moazzem Hossain, officer-in-charge of Atrai Police Station.

He was implicated in a case filed in December 2007 on charges of extortion and torture, said the police.

Meanwhile, the police brought Abdul Karim, president of Shikarpur union Jamaat, and activists Shahadat Ali and Faruk Hossain before the court of judicial Magistrate Akhtarul Alam under the section 54 of CrPc.

The police prayed for a 10-day remand for each.

GRAFT CASE

Bail to Jalil extended

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court (HC) yesterday extended its earlier order granting bail to Awami League (AL) General Secretary Abdul Jalil in a graft case filed by the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) for amassing wealth illegally and concealing information about the assets.

Upon an extension prayer filed by Jalil, an HC bench comprising Justice Syed Mahmud Hossain and Justice Quamrul Islam Siddiqui extended the bail until disposal of the rule earlier issued by this court upon the ACC and the government to explain why the initiation and proceedings of the case against Jalil should not be declared illegal.

On September 10 last year, upon a petition filed by Jalil, the HC first granted bail to him and issued the rule. The court on November 15 last year extended the order for six months.

The ACC filed the case against Jalil with Ramna Police Station on December 18, 2007.

Advocate SM Rezaul Karim appeared for Jalil.

Yunus briefs Hillary about Grameen healthcare plans

NEWS WORLD, Washington

US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton yesterday received Prof Muhammad Yunus and the Grameen Healthcare delegation to the World Healthcare Congress at her office.

During a 90-minute meeting with the 14-member Grameen delegation, Prof Yunus briefed the secretary about Grameen's healthcare plans and social business initiatives.

Secretary Clinton, who visited Grameen Bank in 1995, and is a long-time proponent of microcredit for the poor, offered her support to Grameen's healthcare programme.

Prof Yunus discussed, in particular, the proposed creation of a Grameen Medical College and teaching hospital as joint venture collaboration with a leading school of medicine of a premier US university.

Prof Yunus updated the US secretary of state on the latest developments within Grameen Bank. He also emphasized the importance of a new legislation to create microfinance banks in the USA and other countries.

Hillary sought Prof Yunus's assistance in crafting a bill for that purpose. She pointed out that microfinance can play a key role during the current financial crisis by helping the unemployed generate to create self-employment.

The two leaders also dis-

cussed issues of global warming and environmental degradation and its threat to Bangladesh.

Yunus, pointing out that climate change was an issue of life and death for Bangladesh, requested Hillary Clinton's support for global action and initiatives to help Bangladesh counteract the effects of climate change.

He requested the secretary to pay special attention to the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and help them cope with the current global financial crisis.

He also sought her help in allowing duty-free access to garment products from Bangladesh to the USA.

Bangla Bhai's accomplice arrested

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

The Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) arrested a Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) operative, who was an accomplice of top JMB leader Siddiqui Islam alias Bangla Bhai, in Rajshahi city last night.

The arrestee was identified as Bipul Ahmed.

Acting on a tip-off, Rab members arrested Bipul during a raid on Sonadia crossing around 8:00pm.

DHAKA TODAY

Discussion

A discussion on 'International Finance Corporation Bangladesh Investment Climate Fund (IFC BICF)' stakeholder opinion survey highlights 2008: Voices for business reforms' will be held. Venue: Hotel Sheraton. Time: 3:45pm.

Exhibition

A solo painting exhibition by Nusrat Jahan Nazlee will begin. Venue: Bay's Galleria. Time: 5:30pm.

Reunion

The reunion of 11th BCS Forum will be held. Venue: Bham auditorium. Time: 5:00pm.

Premiere

The premiere of 'Hena Das: Her Odyssey' will be held. Venue: Public Library auditorium. Time: 7:00pm.

Discussion

National Awami Party (NAP) Bhasani will hold a discussion to mark the historical Mujib Nagar Day. Venue: National Press Club. Time: 10:30am.

Exhibition

Radiant Students' Interior Product and Ikebana Exhibition will be held.

Congress

The 2nd World Congress on Manual Therapy 09 will begin. Venue: Dhaka University Senate Bhavan. Time: 9:00am.

Seminar

Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon (Bapa) and Sundar Jiban will organise a seminar titled 'Climate change: Its impact on health and environment'. Venue: Dhaka Reporters' Unity. Time: 10:30am.

Recital

Humayun Azad Sangha organises a recital, which will be followed by a discussion. Venue: Swaparjito Swadhinata premises. Time: 3:00pm.

Reunion

Moni Singh-Farhad Trust organises a Baishakhi reunion. Venue: Rooftop of the Trust Bhavan. Time: 3:00pm.

Maulana Sakhawat among 8 Razakars sued

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Eight 'Razakars' of Keshabpur upazila of Jessore district, including Jatiya Party presidium member and former lawmaker Maulana Sakhawat Hossain have been sued for killing freedom fighter Kawser Ali during liberation war in 1971.

Haider Ali, son of slain freedom fighter Kawser Ali of Mahadevpur village, filed the petition case with the senior judicial magistrate's court Wednesday afternoon.

The court has ordered OC of Keshabpur police station to record the case after proper investigation.

Other accused are Abdul Azim, Abdul Aziz, Abdul Alim Khan, Hossain Ali Morol, Abdul Bari Wadudi, Ibrahim Hossain and Lutfar Rahman.

The complainant in his petition said Maulana Sakhawat Hossain along with seven other accused was involved in murders, lootings, rape and arson attack during the liberation war.

During the time, the accused killed freedom fighters Matleb, Pachu, Haran, Gaffar, Tasir, Aziz and Mozammel Huq, it said.

The 'Razakars' led by Maulana Sakhawat equipped with arms swooped on the house of freedom fighter Kawser Ali at 10:00 am on November 15 in 1971. Later, Maulana Sakhawat gunned down his father Kawser Ali in a fallow land at Mahadevpur village while five others fired five shots at his head and chest to confirm the death, the complainant alleged and added that he could not file any case so long due to political reasons.

The JP presidium member was also sued along with two others last March 15 for killing freedom fighter Abdul Motaleb during the war.

Contractors clash over Wasa tender

15 held, released

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two groups of contractors locked in a clash at Segunbagicha in the city yesterday over a tender of Dhaka Wasa worth Tk 6.47 crore.

Shahbagh police picked up 15 contractors in this connection and later freed them after interrogation.

The clash ensued at around 11:00am when a group of outsiders tried to refrain some contractors from getting inside the Wasa's executive engineer's office to drop tenders.

Officer-in-Charge of Shahbagh Police Station Rezaul Karim told The Daily Star they had picked up 15 people and later set them free after knowing that all of them were contractors.

No case has been filed in this connection as the executive engineer's office of the Wasa said that the incident took place outside their office.

Wasa sources said they had invited tenders to complete underground drains from Jigatola to Hazaribagh and maintain the drainage system at Gulshan and Badda.

Hannan, 13 other Huji men indicted

FROM PAGE 1

were filed with the Ramna Police Station.

The accused include Mufti Hannan, Arif Hasan Suman alias Abdur Razzak, Moulana Akbar Hossain alias Helaluddin, Shahadat Ullah alias Jewel, Moulana Abu Taher, Moulana Abdur Rauf, Moulana Mohammad Tajuddin, Moulana Abdul Hannan Sabbir, Moulana Shawkat Osman alias Sheikh Farid, Hafez Jahangir Alam Badar, Moulana Abu Bakar alias Selim Hawlader, Mufti Shafiqur Rahman, Moulana Yahya and Mufti Abdul Hye.

Of them, Mufti Hannan, Suman, Rauf, Jewel and Taher, arrested from various places on different dates, are now in jail custody while Akbar is on a High Court (HC) bail.

All five arrestees were produced before the court amid tight security. Akbar was also present at the court.

They pleaded not guilty

after the charges brought against them were read out.

Moulana Tajuddin, younger brother of former BNP deputy minister Abdus Salam Pintu, and seven other accused have been absconding since filing of the cases. Charges were framed against them in absentia.

The court fixed April 28, 29 and 30 for trial of the case filed under the Explosive Substances Act and set May 3, 4 and 5 for trial of the murder case.

It also summoned complainants in the cases to appear before it on the scheduled dates.

Both the prosecution and the defence had earlier completed hearing on charge framing.

The prosecution argued that the charges brought against the accused were primarily proved and they be charged with carrying out the bomb attack.

But the defence prayed for

clearing their clients of the charges saying the charges brought against them were false, fabricated and baseless.

On December 30 last year, the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) pressed charges against Huji chief Mufti Abdul Hannan and 13 others for committing the offence.

CID Inspector Abu Hena Mohammad Yusuf, investigation officer (IO) in both the cases, submitted the charge sheets to the Dhaka Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court showing 84 people as prosecution witnesses.

Following the incident, Akbar was arrested for his alleged involvement in the blast. He gave a confessional statement to a magistrate disclosing Mufti Hannan's involvement in the incident.

The investigation remained incomplete although it got a boost after the caretaker government came to power.

During investigation, three others including Hannan and Jewel gave confessional statements to magistrates on different dates.

The charge sheets said the Huji members orchestrated the attack at their headquarters and the Saat Gambuj Mosque, both located in the capital's Mohammadpur.

Suman, Jewel, Johnny and Sujon carried the bombs to Ramna Park that day. Posing as decorators, they entered the park through the gate adjacent to the National Tennis Complex at around 4:00am. Johnny detonated the bombs by remote control.

The charge sheets also said Ramna Batamul, where thousands of people gather to celebrate the Bangla New Year, was chosen as the target because Huji considers Pabala Baishakh celebrations anti-Islamic.

Moulana Tajuddin supplied the bombs.



Rain likely

UNB, Dhaka

Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely to occur at a few places over Barisal and Chittagong divisions and at one or two places over Rajshahi.

Dhaka, Khulna and Sylhet divisions with moderately heavy to heavy falls at one or two places over Barisal and Chittagong divisions in next 12 hours until 6:00pm today.

Day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country, Met Office said.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:21pm today and rises at 5:35am tomorrow.

Highest temperature 37.6 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Jessore and lowest 24.2 degrees Celsius at Ishwardi.

Highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

City/Town	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	Max	Min	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	35.8	26.5	79	68
Chittagong	36.8	26.3	74	90
Rajshahi	31.6	25.1	80	50
Khulna	36.0	26.0	70	73
Barisal	35.5	26.0	73	83
Sylhet	33.5	25.8	79	57
Cox's Bazar	33.0	25.4	75	92